

**Silver Spring  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
July 8, 2010**

Abbreviations used herein:

CBD = Central Business District

SOV = Single Occupant Vehicle

TMD = Transportation Management District Advisory Committee

WMATA = Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

**Item 1 and 2 – Introduction/Minutes approval:** Members and guests introduced themselves. Approval of the June minutes was postponed pending arrival of a quorum.

**Item 3 – Chair’s Comments:** Co-Chair **Samantha Mazo** welcomed **Delegate Tom Hucker** to the Committee and explained the mission of the Transportation Management District (TMD). She said the Advisory Committee represents a cross section of the Silver Spring community, consisting of neighborhood representatives, large and small businesses and Silver Spring Chamber representatives that advise the County Executive on transportation issues affecting the Central Business District (CBD).

**Sande Brecher** added that the Committee, working with Commuter Services staff, also actively promotes alternatives to Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) use by providing recommendations on:

- Carpools and vanpools
- Biking and walking
- Pedestrian & bicycle safety
- Telework
- Employer traffic mitigation plans

**Item 4 – Discussion/Q&A:** **Delegate Hucker** thanked the Committee for inviting him. He said he is currently a member of the Environmental Matters Committee representing the Silver Spring and Takoma Park area. The committee deals with all transportation policy matters and planning for the State of Maryland. He is also on the Land Use & Ethics Subcommittee.

**Mr. Hucker** said transportation issues are driven by population growth, which in Maryland is currently more than five million (5.7 million) and is expected to grow by another million in 20 years. However, smart growth policies which are used to guide population growth receive push back from some of his constituents and also from powerful political interests that aren’t always in favor of smart growth land use. While smart growth is good for urban areas, rural areas are not smart growth oriented. Even though there is a new Secretary for the Maryland Department of Planning [**Richard Hall**] under the **O’Malley** Administration who has a background in planning experience, there remains strong opposition in some quarters to smart growth planning initiatives.

**Mr. Hucker** said there is legislation which seeks to enhance smart growth, creating incentives for developers. Some members of the Environmental Matters Committee want to steer in the direction of development toward historical, enterprise and economic development zones, but the other is against such development.

Two years ago a task force was assembled comprised of three representatives each from Western, Southern, Eastern shores, Baltimore and Washington areas [Task Force on the Future for Growth and

Development]. **Mr. Hucker** introduced an amendment to change the task force composition, which now has five members from the Silver Spring area, producing more proportional representation on the committee.

**Mr. Hucker** said most of the opposition to Smart Growth comes from the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo). MACo Board members are the elected officials of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City. Members include the mayor of Baltimore City, county executives, county and Baltimore City council members, and county commissioners. Although there is support for smart growth land use, such initiatives are voted down by the other counties with less population.

**Mr. Hucker** said there are currently two bills pending in Congress related to transportation:

- New Starts Program - transit funding for the next six years with 10 percent going to Green transportation investments. New Starts supports locally planned and operated public transit projects like light rail and bus systems.
- Transportation re-authorization bill [formerly known as SAFETEA-LU] which will determine transportation spending for the next six years.

**Mr. Hucker** said he is an ex-officio board member of the Purple Line Now. The board has been strongly advocating for Purple Line construction for 10 years. Purple Line Now President **Harry Sanders** recently passed away in March and has been replaced by **Ralph Bennet**. The Purple Line is receiving some opposition from the University of Maryland. The university claims that the Purple Line will cause electromagnetic interference of the Physics Department equipment. **Mr. Hucker** added that these claims cannot be verified.

**Ed Furgol**, in reference to employment proximity to transit, said the Navy Yard Metro stop where he works regrets not placing the stop closer to its site because the distance adds pressure to the transit system and is a disincentive for prospective employees.

**Mr. Hucker** continued that winning funding for the Purple Line project looks good because it is the top priority of the Congressional delegation. However, they must remain vigilant because of constant project derailment from those who against the project.

**Mr. Hucker** discussed MARC train issues. He said breakdowns or single tracking tend to occur more during bad weather, such as heat-related problems affecting the rail tracks. This demonstrates the lack of funding for maintenance and over-capacity issues. **Ms. Brecher** mentioned also that there was competition between freight rail and commuter rail, especially on the Brunswick line. **Ms. Mazo** said that with the MARC ticket offices gone, purchasing tickets is a problem because monthly vouchers are only purchased through Commuter Direct and can only be exchanged at Union Station. Most riders are not going to go out of their way to exchange tickets so they pay a \$3 surcharge.

**Ms. Brecher** said that because Commuter Direct is in Arlington, she tried to get the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to allow Montgomery County to exchange and sell MARC rail tickets, but MTA is adamant about not changing the way tickets are sold. Now the focus is getting the vouchers on to SmarTrip card which also presents problems.

**Mr. Wexler** suggested the committee could write a letter on behalf of Commuter Services urging MTA to allow CSS to exchange and sell MARC vouchers.

As MARC train rider, **Michael Price** explained that the problems with MARC are due to comfort issues and the lack of trains to handle rider capacity. He also believes if the level of service and quality was

increased, commuters would take advantage of it because the MARC train is faster than commuting on I-270 which would be a huge benefit to commuters.

**Mr. Hucker** said because it also is difficult to find the MARC schedule on the MTA website, showing the lack of attention to MARC which should be showcased as an asset.

**Mr. Wexler** suggested the Committee invite **Muriel Bowser** from the Transportation Planning Board to a future meeting to report on the status of a CSX proposal. CSX is requesting COG to raise bridges allowing for double stack freight trains; however, COG is asking for easier passage of MARC and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) trains allowing for more capacity. **Mr. Wexler** said that it would be beneficial to work with TPB in putting pressure on freight to allow for more MARC trains, since this may alleviate demand/capacity issues.

**Ms. Brecher** said during the development of the White Flint Sector Plan, there were discussions about adding a MARC train stop, but it was reasoned that another stop would have to be shut down because of capacity limitations of the system. She warned that the current problems of transit will become worse in the future if a stable funding source is not available. Also, **Ms. Brecher** asked if there was any discussion in the State Assembly about dedicated transit funding sources because transit must be kept available and affordable to accommodate future transit oriented development.

**Mr. Hucker** said that there is not enough discussion or action on dedicated funding. However, there is a Blue Ribbon Commission on transit funding. The Commission seats have not yet been filled, but it will consist of four law makers, four cabinet secretaries and various stakeholders. The purpose of the Commission will be assess all transit funding formulas such as bicycle, pedestrian, roads and transit items. The Commission will produce an interim report by January 2011, in time for the next Senate session; and then a final report by November 2011. In response to **Ms. Mazo's** question regarding how transit is funded without a dedicated source, **Mr. Hucker** explained that transportation is funded from an integrated account called the Transportation Trust Fund. The trust fund receives its revenue from the state's gas tax.

**Mr. Hucker** expressed his concerns about the State of Maryland not having a line item dedicated to Metro or other transit funding, unlike major cities such as Chicago, Boston or New York. He sees the problem starting with the federal government, which views Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) funding solely as a tri-state issue. However, federal government employees depend on WMATA for work travel, and it is also important in the event of a national security evacuation response.

**Mr. Hucker** mentioned a Congressional transportation funding bill backed by **Tom Davis** (R-Va.) that secured \$150 million from the federal government and \$50 million commitment each from Maryland Virginia, stating that even though **Rep. Davis'** formula worked, the bill took too long to be approved. The delay resulted in insufficient funding to cover maintenance and repairs to the Metro system which now total \$11 billion.

**Item 5 – Falkland Chase Traffic Mitigation Agreement:** **Mr. Carlson** suggested members submit their input via email regarding a possible Committee recommendation for the project [presentation given at the May meeting] – vote to be taken at the next meeting.

**Item 6 – Updates:** **Ms. Brecher** discussed the Sustainable Commuting Workshop conference which took place June 6<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the seminar was to discuss ways to increase the number of people who reside near their work places; telework was also discussed. There were panels and presenters discussing financial programs, housing vs. commute cost benefit research geared toward assisting

employers and employees obtain homes near their work sites. Even though the conference was well attended, success will be measured by how many of the employers in attendance utilize these programs to reduce work place commutes.

In response to a question about teleworking, **Ms. Brecher** said that one of the presenters, **Jeff Schumacher** from the Microsoft Corporation reported that his company has created a seamless environment using teleworking technology; they are able to have meetings with employees from all over the world. **Ms. Mazo** said that policy changes regarding telework at the state and county level might attract more people to the County.

**Ms. Brecher** reported that County's car sharing proposal is moving forward. The proposal offers County parking facilities to car sharing companies which could enhance County revenue, reduce personal car use and allow more visibility for car sharing vendors. Currently, vendors are being interviewed and contracts may be negotiated by the fall.

The County is submitting a bike sharing proposal under the TIGER II grant. The Transportation Planning Board, which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, is reviewing the proposal which will provide Bike Sharing stations around Montgomery County. The grant is for a minimum of \$10 million. The County applied for the TIGER I grant but was turned down which is why the TIGER II grant proposal was submitted.

**Mr. Wexler** suggested inviting **Muriel Bowser** to the Committee to explain MPO role in planning for the various transportation proposals such as bike sharing.

**Ms. Brecher** announced that Social and Scientific Systems won an award for its marketing program from Council of Government's (COG) Employer Recognition awards, June 23rd. Previous winners were Discovery Communications, Commuter Services and Division of Traffic and Engineering Operations.

**Item 7 – September Meeting:**

The September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting was changed to the 16<sup>th</sup> due to the Rosh Hashanah holiday.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am

Next meeting: Sept. 16, 2010

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet**  
**July 8, 2010**

<b>Voting Members (12)</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Chamber Members (3)</b>			
Martin Atkinson	M&T Bank		X
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online		X
Samantha Mazo / Co-chair	Linowes and Blocher LLP	X	
<b>Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)</b>			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Vacant	North & West Sector Plan Area		
Andrew Wexler / Co-chair	CBD Resident	X	
<b>Employers less than 50 employees (3)</b>			
Rukiyat Gilbert	Southern Management Co.	X	
Everton Latty	iDeal Decisions, Inc.	X	
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc. of N. America		X
<b>Employers with 50 or more employees (3)</b>			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems		X
Vacant			
<b>Non-Voting Members (4)</b>			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Vacant	M-NCPPC		
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police		X
<b>Staff</b>			
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
<b>Guests</b>			
Del. Tom Hucker	MD House of Delegates – Dist. 20	X	